

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP, US, MILI

SUBJECT: STATUS OF THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS

1. THIS THIRD ROUND OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WAS THE MOST PRODUCTIVE ROUND THUS FAR. THE SPANISH MIGHT AT THIS POINT HAVE DECIDED FOR TACTICAL REASONS TO SUSPEND NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE OF OUR UNRESPONSIVENESS TO THEIR BASIC REQUEST FOR A NATO-STYLE SECURITY COMMITMENT AND IN PIQUE OVER OUR ARMS SUPPLY PROGRAM TO MOROCCO, BUT THEY DID NOT. QUITE THE CONTRARY, THEY DECIDED TO ACCEPT NOW WHAT THEY KNEW THEY WOULD HAVE TO ACCEIP IN THE END - THAT IS, THAT THEY COULD NOT HAVE AN EXPRESS SECURITY COMMITMENT - AND TO MOVE ON TO OTHER ISSUES, ALTHOUGH THEY SAID THEY WOULD RETURN TO THE FIRST TWO ITEMS OF THE AGENDA BEFORE THE END. THEIR HAVING SO REACTIED GIVES SUPPORT TO THE THESIS THAT THEY VERY MUCH WANT A NEW AGREEMENT THIS YEAR. THIS THESIS WAS FURTHER SUPPORTED BY THE POSITIVE ATTITUDES OF UNDERSECRETARY ROVIRA AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SPANISH DLELGATION THROUGHOUT THIS ROUND AND BY THE FOREIFN MINISTER'S SPECIFIC EXPRESSION TO ME OF CONFIDENCE IN A NEW AGREEMENT WHEN I SAW HIM ON ANOTHER SUBJECT THIS WEEK (EMBTel 933). ROVIRA'S POINT THAT SPAIN'S BASIC POLICY WAS TO BE WITH THE WEST DOUBTLESS WAS THE UNDERLYING EXPLANATION. A PROXIMATE CAUSE MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN A FEELING OF INSECURITY ON THE

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PART OF THE SPANISH GOVT RESULTING FROM LABOR

AND STUDENT PROBLEMS, UNCERTAINTY OVER HOW LONG FRANCO CAN LUVW AND MOROCCO'S AGGRESSIVENESS.

2. BUT SPAIN WANTS AN AGREEMENT THAT IS POLITICALLY PALATABLE INTERNALLY, NOT ONLY FOR NEW BUT ALSO FOR THE FUTURE. THEREFORE, THE SPANISH NEGOTIATORS WILL NEGOTIATE HARD ON OTHER ISSUES, INCLUDING THE U.S. PRESENCE AND U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THEIR MILITARY MODERNIZATION, AND THEY WILL NOT BE HURRIED, ALTHOUGH THEY DO WANT TO GET ON WITH THE WORK OF THE NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE THERE IS SO MUCH LEFT TO COVER AND THE TIME IS NO LONGER SO GREAT BEFORE SUMMER VACATIONS AND THE SEPT TERMINATION DATE OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT.

3. THERE IS MUCH SPECULATION ABOUT WHETHER FRANCO WILL SOON DIE, VOLUNTARILY GIVE UP ALL OR MOST OF HIS CURRENT FUNCTIONS, OR BE PUSHED OUT. HE MAY WELL DIE OR BECOME INCAPACITATED FROM OLD AGE AND A COMBINATION OF ILLNESSES BEFORE THIS YEAR IS OUT. THERE ARE PERSISTENT REPORTS THAT HIS STRENGTH IS DECLINING AT AN ACCELERATING PACE. NEVERTHELESS, HE CONTINUES TO WORK QUITE HARD AND TO BE THE CENTRAL DECISION POINT. THERE IS ALSO SOME POSSIBILITY, ALTHOUGH NOT, I THINK, A PROBABILITY, THAT HE WILL BE REMOVED, OR PUSHED, FROM POWER. AMONG THE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES, THE MOST LIKELY ONE IS, I BELIEVE, THAT HIS PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND IN OTHER GOVT FUNCTIONS WILL DECREASE, BUT NOT END ALTOGETHER, DURING THIS YEAR. THERE MAY IN THE PROCESS BE SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER FORMAL TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS TO JUAN CARLOS.

4. IT WILL BE EASIER TO REACH A NEW AGREEMENT WITH SPAIN IF FRANCO REMAINS IN POWER. HOWEVER, THE TRANSITION IS ALREADY IN PROCESS IN SPAIN, AND IT IS LIKELY THAT HE WILL NOT BE IN POWER FOR MUCH OF THE LIFE OF THE NEW AGREEMENT. WE SHOULD, SO BELIEVE, BASE OUR

POSITION IN THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WE REACH SHOULD
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BE, AS WELL AS ONE THAT MEETS OUR BASIC SECURITY REQUIREMENT, ONE DESIGNED TO BE VIABLE AFTER HE IS GONE AND ALSO DESIGNED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE TO OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH SPAIN.
EATON

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